Preparatory Committee for the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATIONS OF FRANCE, CHINA, THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT AT THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW CONFERENCE

The delegations of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America, in the particular context of the commencement of the strengthened review process agreed at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, reiterate our countries' strong and continuing support for the Treaty. We express our determination to continue to implement fully all the provisions of the Treaty, including those of article VI.

Stressing the importance of the indefinite extension of the Treaty, we reaffirm our continued support for the documents adopted by consensus on 11 May 1995 by the Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty.[1]

We welcome the fact that Andorra, Angola, Chile, Comoros, Djibouti, the United Arab Emirates, Vanuatu and Oman have acceded to the Treaty since the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. We stress the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Treaty which would contribute to the enhancement of both regional and global security.

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Since the May 1995 Review and Extension Conference, there have been very significant developments in the area of nuclear disarmament, notably with respect to the programme of action set out in the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament:[2]

(a) The completion by the Conference on Disarmament of the negotiations on a universal and internationally and effectively verifiable Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty in 1996 is a step that has long been one of the highest priority objectives of the international community.

The signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty by more than 140 States, including the 5 nuclear-weapon States that signed on the first day of its opening for signature on 24 September 1996, is a historic event.

By banning any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion, the Treaty, as stated in its preamble, by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, constitutes an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects.

This is why China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States value this Treaty. We are pleased to see that, in such a short period of time since the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, this major achievement, followed by the successful creation of the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty took place.

We stress the importance of early signature and ratification of the Treaty by all States which would facilitate its early entry into force; this is an objective we fully share.

(b) We also reaffirm our readiness for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, universal and internationally and effectively verifiable convention banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, a goal contained in the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and as its second step, following the completion of the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.

Such a treaty will cap the fissile material stockpiles available for use in nuclear weapons and, by adding new constraints, will strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and will constitute a significant step towards the eventual achievement of nuclear disarmament.

We encourage all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to fulfil this shared commitment set forth in the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We also stress the importance for the States which are not yet parties to the Treaty to join the negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty in accordance with the statement of the Special Coordinator of the Conference on Disarmament and the mandate contained therein.

(c) It is the responsibility and obligation of all States to contribute to the relaxation of international tension and to the strengthening of international peace and security. The nuclear-weapon States underscore the important and tangible progress achieved in the area of nuclear disarmament and reaffirm our determination to continue the pursuit by the nuclear-weapon States of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons, and by all States of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

In this context we welcome the recent understanding reached by the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the United States at Helsinki on further reductions of nuclear weapons building on progress already achieved.

The other steps being taken by us in this area are also to be welcomed.

We also welcome the removal of all nuclear weapons of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from the territories of Belarus, Kazakstan and Ukraine.

(d) China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States reaffirm our conviction that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, enhances global and regional peace and security.

We consider that the signature by all the nuclear-weapon States of the Protocols to the Treaty of Rarotonga and the Treaty of Pelindaba, establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in the South Pacific and in Africa, was a significant development. By signing these protocols, all the nuclear-weapon States are giving security assurances in treaty form to the very large number of States concerned.

Moreover, we remain ready to work with the signatories of the Treaty on the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone to remove those obstacles currently preventing the nuclear-weapon States from signing the Protocol to that Treaty.

These steps are in line with the security assurances we have provided in our national declarations, which are referred to in Security Council resolution 984 (1995) of 11 April 1995 and constitute a positive development with regard to the relevant paragraph of the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

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We are ready to contribute to global nuclear non-proliferation objectives by doing our part in support of the programme for strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system. In this regard, we intend to apply those measures provided for in the model protocol that each of us identifies as capable of contributing to the non-proliferation and efficiency aims of the Protocol, when implemented with regard to that State, and as consistent with that State's obligations under article I of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States attach importance to the full implementation of article IV of the Treaty. In this context we reaffirm our commitment towards cooperation in the field of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with articles I, II and III of the Treaty and following the decision on the principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

Notes

[1] 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document, Part I (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I)).

[2] Ibid., decision 2.